

The Non-Itemizer Charitable Deduction provision will initially allow non-itemizers to deduct 50 percent of their charitable giving, after they exceed a cumulative total of \$500 in annual donations, \$1,000 for joint filers. The deduction will be phased into a 100 percent deduction over the course of 5 years in 10 percent increments. Under current law non-itemizers receive no additional tax benefit for their charitable contributions.

More than 84 million Americans cannot deduct any of their charitable contributions because they do not itemize their tax returns. In contrast, there are 34 million Americans who itemize and receive this benefit. For example, in Pennsylvania, there are nearly 4 million taxpayers who do not itemize deductions while slightly more than 1.5 million taxpayers do itemize.

While Americans are already giving generously to charities making a significant positive impact in our communities, this provision provides an incentive for additional giving and allows non-itemizers who typically have middle to lower middle incomes to also benefit from additional tax relief. In fact, non-itemizers earning less than \$30,000 give the highest percentage of their household income to charity. It is estimated that restoring this tax relief provision to merely 50 percent which existed in the 1980's would encourage more than \$3 billion of additional charitable giving a year. The phased in increase to 100 percent will result in even more additional giving. The floor is included because the standard personal deduction encompasses initial contributions.

One important dimension of promoting charitable efforts helping to revitalize our communities, empower individuals and families, and enhance educational opportunities is encouraging charitable giving. This legislation is a great opportunity to lower the tax burden on the many Americans who have not received any tax relief for their charitable contributions since 1986.

The IRA Charitable Rollover allows individuals to roll assets from an IRA into a charity or a deferred charitable gift plan without incurring any income tax consequences. The donation would be made to charity directly without ever withdrawing it as income and paying taxes on it.

The rollover can be made as an outright gift, for a charitable remainder annuity trust, charitable remainder unitrust or pooled income fund, or for the issuance of a charitable annuity. The donor would not receive a charitable deduction. This incentive should assist charitable giving in education, social service, and religious charitable efforts.

Food banks are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the demand for food assistance. In the past, food banks

have benefitted from the inefficiencies of manufacturing, including the overproduction of merchandise and the manufacturing of cosmetically-flawed products. However, technology has made businesses and manufacturers significantly more efficient. Although beneficial to the company's bottom-line, donations have lessened as a result. The fact is that the demand on our nation's church pantries, soup kitchens and shelter continues to rise, despite our economy.

According to an August 2000 report on Hunger Security by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 31 million Americans, around 10 percent of our citizens, are living on the edge of hunger. Although this number has declined by 12 percent since 1995, everyone agrees that this figure remains too high.

Unfortunately, many food banks cannot meet this increased demand for food. A December '99 study by the U.S. Conference of Mayors found that requests for emergency food assistance increased by an average of 18 percent in American cities over the previous year and 21 percent of emergency food requests could not be met. Statistics by the United States Department of Agriculture show that up to 96 billion pounds of food goes to waste each year in the United States. If a small percentage of this wasted food could be redirected to food banks, we could make important strides in our fight against hunger. In many ways, current law is a hindrance to food donations.

The tax code provides corporations with a special deduction for donations to food banks, but it excludes farmers, ranchers and restaurant owners from donating food under the same tax incentive. For many of these businesses, it is actually more cost effective to throw away food than donate it to charity. The hunger relief community believes that these changes will markedly increase food donations—whether it is a farmer donating his crop, a restaurant owner contributing excess meals, or a food manufacturer producing specifically for charity.

This bipartisan legislation was introduced separately by Senators Lugar and Leahy with 13 additional cosponsors including myself. It has been endorsed by a diverse set of organizations, including America's Second Harvest Food Banks, the Salvation Army, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers Union, the National Restaurant Association, and the Grocery Manufacturers of America.

Under current law, when a corporation donates food to a food bank, it is eligible to receive a "special rule" tax deduction. Unfortunately, most companies have found that the "special rule" deduction does not allow them to recoup their actual production costs. Moreover, current law limits the "special rule" deduction only to corporations, thus prohibiting farmers, ranch-

ers, small businesses and restaurant owners from receiving the same tax benefits afforded to corporations.

This provision would encourage additional food donations through three changes to our tax laws: This bill will extend the "special rule" tax deduction for food donations now afforded only to corporations to all business taxpayers, including farmers and restaurant owners. This legislation will increase the tax deduction for donated food from basis plus \circ markup to the fair market value of the product, not to exceed twice the product's basis. This bill will codify the Tax Court ruling in *Lucky Stores, Inc. v. IRS*, in which the Court found that taxpayers should base the determination of fair market value of donated product on recent sales.

I would like to thank my colleagues for joining me in this important effort to increase savings opportunities for lower income working Americans, to encourage the charitable giving of all Americans, to provide additional resources for the charitable organizations which serve their communities, and to encourage additional donations of food to alleviate hunger. I would also encourage my other colleagues to consider supporting this important initiative.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 61—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SHOULD RECOGNIZE BOARD CERTIFICATIONS FROM THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIAN SPECIALISTS, INC., FOR PURPOSES OF THE PAYMENT OF SPECIAL PAY BY THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

Mr. HUTCHINSON submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

S. RES. 61

Whereas the United States has, in the course of its history, fought in many wars and conflicts to defend freedom and protect the interests of the Nation;

Whereas millions of men and women have served the Nation in times of need as members of the Armed Forces;

Whereas the service of veterans has been of vital importance to the Nation and the sacrifices made by veterans and their families should not be forgotten with the passage of time;

Whereas the obligation of the Nation to provide the best health care benefits to veterans and their families takes precedence over all else;

Whereas veterans deserve comprehensive and high-quality health care services;

Whereas the Secretary of Veterans Affairs only recognizes board certifications of allopathic physicians from specialty boards that are members of the American Board of Medical Specialties and board certifications of osteopathic physicians from specialty

boards recognized by the Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists;

Whereas physicians not certified by the American Board of Medical Specialties or the Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists are not eligible for special pay for board certification;

Whereas there are other nationally recognized organizations that certify physicians for practice in areas of specialty;

Whereas the failure of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to recognize board certifications from other nationally recognized organizations may limit the pool of qualified physicians from which the Department of Veterans Affairs can hire; and

Whereas not recognizing board certifications of other nationally recognized organizations, such as the American Association of Physician Specialists, Inc., may limit the ability of veterans to receive the highest quality health care: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should, for the purposes of the payment of special pay by the Veterans Health Administration, recognize board certifications from the American Association of Physician Specialists, Inc., to the same extent as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs recognizes board certifications from the American Board of Medical Specialties and the Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I rise today to offer a resolution concerning our nation's veterans' population and the quality of health care that they receive.

As a member of this Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, the chairman of the Personnel Subcommittee on the Senate Armed Services Committee, as well as the former chairman of the Health and Hospitals Subcommittee on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am very concerned that today's veterans' community receive the best possible health care coverage that we can provide.

Recently, it was brought to my attention that the Department of Veterans Affairs only recognizes two organizations for physician certification credentials. However, there are other organizations that have pressed the VA to consider their credentials and have been met with a closed door.

While it is my understanding that very recently the Department has rescinded this decision due to the VA General Counsel ruling it to be illegal, the VA still does not recognize other board certifications in the matter of specialty pay.

Within the last few weeks, Congressman JOE SCARBOROUGH, my good friend and former colleague, has introduced legislation on behalf of one of these excluded organizations, the American Association of Physician Specialists. His resolution addresses the issue of board certification recognitions by the new Secretary of the VA to include this organization in the list of organizations that are recognized for certification and special pay.

Today, I am pleased to offer the Senate counter-part to Congressman SCARBOROUGH's legislation in the

hopes that this vehicle may rectify a policy and system that seems faulty.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 27—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE 2008 OLYMPIC GAMES SHOULD NOT BE HELD IN BEIJING UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA RELEASES ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, RATIFIES THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, AND OBSERVES INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. HELMS (for himself, Mr. WELLSTONE, Mr. HUTCHINSON, and Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 27

Whereas the International Olympic Committee is in the process of determining the venue of the Olympic Games in the year 2008 and is scheduled to make that decision at the International Olympic Committee meeting scheduled for Moscow in July 2001;

Whereas the city of Beijing has made a proposal to the International Olympic Committee that the summer Olympic Games in the year 2008 be held in Beijing;

Whereas the Olympic Charter states that Olympism and the Olympic ideal seek to foster "respect for universal fundamental ethical principles";

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/11 (October 25, 1993) recognized "that the Olympic goal of the Olympic Movement is to build a peaceful and better world by educating the youth of the world through sport, practiced without discrimination of any kind and the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding, promoted by friendship, solidarity, and fair play";

Whereas United Nations General Assembly Resolution 50/13 (November 7, 1995) stressed "the importance of the principles of the Olympic Charter, according to which any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, sex, or otherwise is incompatible with the Olympic Movement";

Whereas the Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2000 reports the following:

(1) "The [Chinese] government continued to commit widespread and well-documented human rights abuses, in violation of internationally accepted norms."

(2) "Abuses included instances of extra judicial killings, the use of torture, forced confessions, arbitrary arrest and detention, the mistreatment of prisoners, lengthy incommunicado detention, and denial of due process."

(3) "The Government infringed on citizens' privacy rights."

(4) "The Government maintained tight restrictions on freedom of speech and of the press, and increased its efforts to control the Internet; self-censorship by journalists continued."

(5) "The Government severely restricted freedom of assembly and continued to restrict freedom of association."

(6) "The Government continued to restrict freedom of religion and intensified controls on some unregistered churches."

(7) "The Government continued to restrict freedom of movement."

(8) "The Government does not permit independent domestic nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to monitor publicly human rights conditions."

(9) "[The Government has not stopped] violence against women (including coercive family planning practices—which sometimes include forced abortion and forced sterilization)."

(10) "The Government continued to restrict tightly worker rights, and forced labor in prison facilities remains a serious problem. Child labor exists and appears to be a growing problem in rural areas as adult workers leave for better employment opportunities in urban areas."

(11) "Some minority groups, particularly Tibetan Buddhists and Muslim Uighurs, came under increasing pressure as the Government clamped down on dissent and 'separatist' activities."

Whereas the egregious human rights abuses committed by the Government of the People's Republic of China are inconsistent with the Olympic ideal;

Whereas 119 Chinese dissidents and relatives of imprisoned political prisoners, from 22 provinces and cities, issued an open letter on January 16, 2001, signed at enormous political risk which expresses the "grief and indignation for each of China's political prisoners and their families", asks the Chinese Government to release all of China's political prisoners, and asserts that the release of China's political prisoners will improve "Beijing's stature in its bid for the 2008 Olympics"; and

Whereas although the Government of the People's Republic of China signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1998, but has failed to ratify the treaty, and has indicated that it will not fully implement the recently ratified International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the Congress—

(1) acknowledges and supports the January 16, 2001, open letter released by Chinese dissidents and the families of imprisoned Chinese political prisoners stating that the release of China's political prisoners would improve Beijing's stature in its bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games;

(2) expresses the view that, consistent with its stated principles, the International Olympic Committee should not award the 2008 Olympics to Beijing unless the Government of the People's Republic of China releases all of China's political prisoners, ratifies the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights without major reservations, fully implements the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and observes internationally recognized human rights;

(3) calls for the creation of an international Beijing Olympic Games Human Rights Campaign in the event that Beijing receives the Olympics to focus international pressure on the Government of the People's Republic of China to grant a general amnesty for all political prisoners prior to the commencement of the 2008 Olympics as well as to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

(4) calls on the Secretary of State to endorse publicly the creation of the Beijing Olympic Games Human Rights Campaign in the event that Beijing receives the Olympics,